



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 20, 2009**

**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**  
**YUSILL SCRIBNER**  
**REBEKAH CARMICHAEL**  
**JANICE OH**  
**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**  
**(212) 637-2600**

**FBI**  
**JIM MARGOLIN, MONICA McLEAN**  
**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**  
**(212) 384-2720, 2715**

**ARREST IN \$27 MILLION FRAUDULENT TAKEOVER OF  
NATIONAL BANK OF ETHIOPIA'S CITIBANK ACCOUNT**

LEV L. DASSIN, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and JOSEPH M. DEMAREST, JR., the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced today the indictment and arrest of PAUL GABRIEL AMOS in connection with an elaborate, internationally coordinated scheme to gain access to, or "take over," an account at Citibank in Manhattan belonging to the National Bank of Ethiopia ("NBE"), and to steal approximately \$27,167,078 from that account. As detailed in an Indictment returned yesterday in Manhattan federal court:

NBE serves as the central bank for Ethiopia and maintains offices in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Citibank N.A. provided U.S. Dollar account facilities to NBE through an account at Citibank's offices at 111 Wall Street in Manhattan. During the period September through November 2008, AMOS and his co-conspirators caused bogus documents to be sent to Citibank from, among other places, Lagos, Nigeria. These bogus documents included a "Corporate Resolution for Banking" purportedly issued by senior NBE officials, and a purported "Global Manual Transaction Authorization." Signatures on those documents appeared to match the signatures of NBE officials in Citibank's records. The Authorization, among other things, purported to authorize Citibank to accept wire transfer instructions from NBE by facsimile, and included a list of authorized officials - including the purported Governor of NBE and five other purported NBE officials - who could be contacted by telephone to confirm details of any fax instructions received, in what was referred to as a "call back" security check. In fact, the Corporate Resolution and the

Authorization, while accepted as valid by Citibank, were forgeries and had not in fact been authorized by NBE. Moreover, the telephone contact numbers that AMOS and his co-conspirators provided on the Authorization form did not belong to actual NBE officials in Ethiopia, but instead were Nigeria, South Africa and United Kingdom mobile telephone numbers used by co-conspirators.

After supplying Citibank with the bogus Corporate Resolution and Authorization documents, AMOS and his co-conspirator caused instructions to be sent to a Citibank payments unit in Buffalo, New York, directing Citibank to wire funds from NBE's account to various accounts controlled by AMOS and his co-conspirators. Citibank verified these instructions through call back security checks with one or more of the purported NBE officials. In this manner, between October 2 and October 16, 2008, AMOS and his co-conspirators caused Citibank to make a total of approximately 24 wire transfers, totaling approximately \$27,167,078, to various accounts controlled by AMOS and his co-conspirators in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Australia, China, Cyprus, and the United States.

The Indictment against AMOS was returned late yesterday and charges him with one count of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and wire fraud. If convicted, AMOS faces a maximum sentence of 30 years' imprisonment.

AMOS, 37, a citizen of Nigeria, resided in Singapore until his arrest in Los Angeles on January 15, 2009, while he was seeking to enter the United States. The case has been assigned to United States District Judge PAUL A. CROTTY. AMOS will be presented later today before U.S. Magistrate Judge DEBRA FREEMAN.

Mr. DASSIN praised the investigative work of the FBI in this case. He also thanked Citibank for its assistance in the investigation. Mr. DASSIN said the investigation is continuing.

This investigation is being handled by the Major Crimes Unit of the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys MARCUS A. ASNER and SEETHA RAMACHANDRAN are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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